Volume 14 Article 15

1-1-1926

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By Harold F. Scholz

It was June and twilight gathering over the town of Ames as we lolled about on the depot lawn, in anticipation of three months in the woods of Northern Minnesota and Cass Lake. Now and then one of the fellows would stretch himself, climb over the lawn guardrail and make his way to the station to learn if the eastbound train were on time.

How eager we were to be off! Seconds ticked off with exasperating slowness; minutes dragged into infinity, but after what seemed to be hours, the train whistle broke the funereal stillness of the night. Soon train brakes were set with a protesting squeal.

A scramble followed. We rushed into the station, snatched up our baggage, felt in our pockets to make sure that we still had our tickets and mounted just as we heard the "All Aboard!" call. We were off to Marshalltown and Minneapolis—in the night.

Three hours wait at Marshalltown, with nothing to do or see until 11:50, when the Great Western northbound train pulled in. Once more we boarded the train, soon seats were thrown back, coats and duffle bags pillowed under weary heads with eyes closed in sleep—at 7:50 a. m. the brakeman's harsh voice sounding "St. Paul" roused us, and by 9:00 a. m. Minneapolis lay behind. We were headed north to the tall timber and cool lakes.

We had all expected, upon leaving the "Twin Cities" behind us, to see the hardwood timber give place to evergreens, but in this we were doomed to disappointment. Mile after mile, the train worked its way north and westward through the hardwood forests. Everywhere were rolling hills, well-defined drainage lines, and the never ending woodlots timbered with oak, elm and hickory. Once at Rogers, a small town a few miles north of Minneapolis, we spied a small group of larch in a swamp and our hopes were kindled anew, but they quickly died, as once more the oak clad hilltops rose up to meet the skyline.

Slightly after noon we passed through a little town, not at all unlike a dozen others along the Great Northern railroad, called Sauk Center. This little town had hardly faded from view when we began to notice a marked change in the type of the topography. The low hills gave way to a flat,

poorly-drained glacial plain; lakes began to gleam with startling regularity among the trees. White birch, white spruce, jack-pine and larch were now everywhere in evidence. At last we had reached the pine country of the north.

As the day wore on and we drew nearer and nearer to our journey's end, a more and more often recurring sight met our eyes—thousands of acres of timber that had been burned over by forest fires. The timber had been entirely destroyed for the most part, but now and then some giant pine would stand silhouetted against the sky line, some grim old sentry, keeping watch over the charred remains of a once noble heritage. These fire-scarred monarchs of a golden age seemed to point a warning finger at hunters and campers and railroads. I think, to a man, we resolved then and there to do everything in our power, as Foresters, to stop or control this fire peril which hangs over our foests like a threatening cloud.

At 6:50 p. m., on the day of June 16, we reached the end of the rails and Cass Lake as well. We no sooner stepped off than it began to rain, while a chill wind blew from the north. We made inquiries as to the location of the Iowa State College Forestry Camp and great was our joy when we found "Doctor" Fuestal, "Pug" Ball and "Doctor" Griffith in a pool hall engaged in a friendly round of "call shot." Then, after getting the dope on the best and the CHEAPEST "hotel," a long felt empty gnawing feeling was satiefied in a "cafe."

The next two days were full days. We hauled our equipment four miles over roads that were none too good, put up sleeping tents, cut away brush, dug garbage pits and did a thousand and one things necessary in setting up camps. Our camp lay right by the edge of Cass Lake itself. The location was ideal. We had a well of good water handy to the mess tent, and Pike Bay within a stone's throw of any of the five sleeping tents, but though the beauty of the bay and the charm of the landscape could not be denied, both were lost to us for the time being,—the mosquitoes driving us in at night and our duties keeping us well occupied during the day.

The third day, which was Friday, the twenty freshmen of us and instructor "Perk" Coville gathered lunch, a few prunes and a canteen each, and set out on a fourteen mile "ankle excursion" around the bay. By noon our camp lay five or six miles behind. We ate lunch at Norway Beach, a summer resort for tourists located on the southeast shore of Cass Lake, and soon after started the homeward lap,

reaching camp at five o'clock in the afternoon, somewhat jagged.

The next week, we started in to learn the forestry game in earnest. I will never forget the first real problem that was assigned us. "Perk" told us that we were to lay off a quarter mile traverse and showed us where to begin. For the first quarter mile, the going was good, and we had begun to congratulate ourselves upon our luck in having such a snap, when all of a sudden—and I don't mean "maybe" when I say sudden—we ran into brush. Never in my life did I ever see brush as thick as that was. It was absolutely impossible for "Pug" Ball, who was running the compass, to see more than half a chain ahead of him. "Bubbie" Hill, "Doctor" Griffith and myself all took turns at swinging the axe. "Bubbie" was hampered in that he found it necessary from time to time to daub some evil-smelling ointment on his face and hands, which he claimed kept the mosquitoes away from him. We were all agreed that "Pete" Peters had the most effective mosquito camouflage ever invented; a towel—at least he said that it was—draped from the back of his head and decorated in variegated colors of a peculiar design. This he said worked the charm of keeping the mosquitoes off, wherein the effectiveness was not plain. It looked like any object under the sun—in spots. But to get back to the traverse problem—oh, well, what's the use of saying more about that particular problem? We had a dozen that were a lot worse after that.

Days were soon checked off of the calendar in tallies of seven. Much time was spent in running traverses and collecting other field data necessary for making a cruising map. Occasionally "Skipper" Larsen, the other faculty member of our camp, would take us under his tutelage and we would be initiated into the secrets of such grim realities as growth studies, stem analysis, thinnings, cleanings and yield tables. We found that that term "thinning" was misleading; it should have been rechristened "work." In making a thinning the following procedure was used: first, a plot was found that had a lot of trees on it—the more the better; second, these trees were all measured and counted; third, the "Skippr," after prolonged calculation, told us the degree of thinning that was to be made; and fourth, the plot was thinned to the proper "degree." It was found by careful experimentation that the best time to make these thinnings was from 9:00 a. m. to 4:00 p. m. on a hot day. It had to be at least 90 degrees in the shade or the operation would result in a total failure(?). For all of that, we enjoyed our work and the days flew by so swiftly that it almost seemed

that we got up on Monday morning and went to bed on Sunday night.

July proved to be a month of months. In the first place, we had a lot of guests from Iowa State College on July 19, Professor MacDonald, head of the Forestry Department; Professor Bode of the Forestry Extension Service, and Professor Payne of the Agricultural Engineering Department paid us a visit. The next week we were further honored by visitors from Iowa State College, namely, "Aunt" Maria Roberts, Junior Dean, and Miss Grace Crowston, head nurse of the hospital there, who stopped and paid us a week-end visit. Dr. Pammel, head of the Botany Department, also came this week. The other high spots of the month were two baseball games, one played on the 19th of July and the other on the 26th of July, in which we trimmed the Cass Lake Indians by the scores of 10 to 7 and 13 to 5, respectively; and also a botany trip with Dr. Pammel to the Itasca State Park.

The trip to Itasca State Park was a decided treat to us all. Not only was the trip a very instructive one from the standpoint of botany, but it was interesting because of the many unusual features of scenic value that we got to see, as well. Chief among these were the magnificent Douglas Lodge, the park custodian's lodge, and beautiful Lake Itasca and the Mississippi River at its headwaters. As we stood on the warm 50-foot span over the little stream, in reality but a trickling brook, we could scarcely believe that this small stream which flowed out of the north end of Lake Itasca was the same mighty Mississippi. At Itasca Park we visited the University of Minnesota Foresters. It was with a feeling of regret that we saw the last emerald-capped hill of the park fade from view.

We made a two-day trip to Bemidji to study the large sawmill and box factory; inspected the box factory at Cass Lake, went to Cloquet to study a large pulp mill, a balsam wool factory and several large pulp sawmills. Here is also the United States Forest Service Experiment Station, where we spent the night.

Timber estimating. I like to turn the words over in my mouth and conjure up old memories. A vivid picture is painted on my mind. I can yet see the Norway and white pines with their tall, straight, clean boles and dark green crowns, the endless miles of brush, wet brush, that often soaked us to the skin and tore at our clothes—and the lcouds of mosquitoes! I can still hear the call of the estimator as he calipered the trees with a Biltmore stick and called to the tally man, "Norway, 26-4; jack, 12-3½; aspen, 5; aspen, 6; and birch, 6!" Those were wonderful days in spite of dis-

comforts; days in the open and days that flew by with astonishing speed. They will live forever in our memories. But for the most part, camp life was a quiet affair. Sometimes there would be a little excitement in camp. Upon one occasion, "Rotty," having incurred the wrath of tent three and tent five men, was ungraciously "tubbed" in Pike Bay, and upon another evening, "Tom" Thomas was hauled out of bed, pajamas and all, and tossed into the cooling waters of the old bay for having refused to go to town with the camp shieks.

Our camp had a number of celebrities. First and foremost were the musicians. We had as good a troupe as ever graced a Forestry camp. "Rotty" and Jerry Griswold were our songbirds. Both were good; there was no question about it. "Rotty" always held the audience spellbound and Jerry could wring tears from the heart of the Sphinx with his vocal interpretation of "The Old Town Hall." Then there was "Pete" Peters, who was the most heartless murderer of melody that the world has ever seen. "Pete" would take his old cornet and coax "The Stars and Stripes Forever" from its muted bell in such a dramatic manner that we could almost recognize it as it is played in its true form. "Pete's" tentmates often made dire threats against that horn, but it continued to hang from the cross beam which was fastened to the center pole of tent five during the summer. Second were the fishermen. Hardly a day closed without at least one of these disciples of Isaac Walton having tried his luck. They were quite often successful, too, and several times we had all the bass and pike that we wanted to eat. Oftentimes, a week-end trip would be included in their schedule. They were a jolly good bunch, those fishermen. Last, but not least, were the camp shieks. Many, if we could believe current tales, were the hearts that were broken by the modern Beau Brummels. We could never figure out "Doctor" Griffith's case. He established a unique record in that he did not miss more than two or three nights during the entire summer in going to town.

The last part of August will be remembered for three things: "Prexy" Pearson, president of Iowa State College, and Mr. Gemmill, secretary of the State Board of Education, came to see us, and we played two more baseball games, both of which we won. One of these was with our old rivals, the Cass Lake Indians, and the other was with the Minnesota Engineers, who were now camped at Norway Beach. We took the Indians' scalps to the tune of 13 to 0 on August 16, and we demonstrated our ability to play ball by beating the Engineers by the score of 14 to 7 on August 22.

The week of August 23 marked the beginning of the end. Before breaking camp, a farewell party was given for Forest Supervisor Marshall and his family; Mr. Petheram, superintendent of the Forest Nursery, and Mr. Richardson, a business man and Forestry graduate of Iowa State College. A lunch consisting of coffee, wienies, bread and toasted marshmallows was served.

Breaking camp proved an easier task than setting it up. Within six or seven hours after we had started, the entire outfit was packed, ready for the truck that was to haul it to the station in Cass Lake, and the camp grounds had been "policed up." It was with a lingering backward look that we bade goodbye to the tall pines and the last bit of sparkling water of Pike Bay, in which we had enjoyed so many luxuriant swims. It was a silent group of boys who waited for the southbound trains that night and the next morning. Now that the time had arrived, we were sorry; sorry to leave the brush and the mosqiutoes and the big pines behind us. The end of our first summer in the woods had come only too soon. It is all a memory. Now we are back at Ames looking forward to many more days under the pines.